
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 163 Session of
2021

INTRODUCED BY SCHWANK, FONTANA, HUGHES, STREET, COLLETT,
SANTARSIERO, BLAKE, TARTAGLIONE, COSTA AND KANE,
FEBRUARY 5, 2021

REFERRED TO INTERGOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS, FEBRUARY 5, 2021

AN ACT

1 Providing for social bias and cultural competence training for
2 public employees and licensees and imposing duties on the
3 Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission.

4 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
5 hereby enacts as follows:

6 Section 1. Short title.

7 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Race,
8 Discrimination and Forms of Bias Training Act.

9 Section 2. Definitions.

10 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
11 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
12 context clearly indicates otherwise:

13 "Commission." The Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission.

14 "Cultural competence." The ability to understand,
15 communicate with and effectively interact with individuals of
16 different races, ethnicities, identities and cultures.

17 "Employee." An individual who holds public office or is
18 employed by one of the following:

- 1 (1) The Commonwealth.
- 2 (2) A political subdivision.
- 3 (3) A school district.
- 4 (4) A private school.
- 5 (5) A charter school.
- 6 (6) An institution of higher education.
- 7 (7) A trade school.

8 "Licensee." An individual who receives certification from
9 one of the following State boards:

- 10 (1) The State Board of Accountancy.
- 11 (2) The State Board of Chiropractic.
- 12 (3) The State Board of Dentistry.
- 13 (4) The State Board of Massage Therapy.
- 14 (5) The State Board of Medicine.
- 15 (6) The State Board of Nursing.
- 16 (7) The State Board of Examiners of Nursing Home
17 Administrators.
- 18 (8) The State Board of Occupational Therapy, Education
19 and Licensure.
- 20 (9) The State Board of Optometry.
- 21 (10) The State Board of Osteopathic Medicine.
- 22 (11) The State Board of Pharmacy.
- 23 (12) The State Board of Physical Therapy.
- 24 (13) The State Board of Podiatry.
- 25 (14) The State Board of Psychology.
- 26 (15) The State Board of Examiners in Speech Language and
27 Audiology.
- 28 (16) The State Board of Social Workers, Marriage and
29 Family Therapists and Professional Counselors.
- 30 (17) The State Real Estate Commission.

1 "Political subdivision." A county, city, borough or
2 township.

3 "Public office." Every public office to which an individual
4 can be elected by a vote of the electors under the laws of this
5 Commonwealth.

6 "Social bias." A belief or set of associations about an
7 individual or a group of individuals based upon physical
8 characteristics, race, ethnicity, gender, age, religious creed
9 or sexual orientation which can result in the inaccurate
10 attribution of particular qualities to the individual or group
11 of individuals.

12 Section 3. Training.

13 (a) General rule.--The commission shall develop training
14 which, at a minimum, shall include the understanding of social
15 bias, including, but not limited to, practical techniques to
16 mitigate social bias and improve cultural competence. Employees
17 and licensees shall be required to complete the training every
18 two years.

19 (b) Documentation.--The following shall apply:

20 (1) The commission shall provide documentation to the
21 employee or licensee of their successful completion of the
22 training under subsection (a).

23 (2) The commission shall provide documentation of the
24 successful completion of the training to employers of the
25 employees and licensees upon request.

26 (c) Online training.--The training shall be conducted over a
27 secure online course through the commission's publicly
28 accessible Internet website.

29 (d) Continuing education requirements.--The commission shall
30 develop a program that meets continuing education requirements

1 for licensees and the number of credit hours to be earned for
2 the completion of the training.

3 (e) Notification.--The commission shall send notification by
4 United States mail and electronic mail of the need to renew the
5 required training to employees and licensees within 60 days of
6 the training expiration.

7 Section 4. Effective date.

8 This act shall take effect in 60 days.